

**CAPE PREMIER AFFIRMS LOYALTY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**Says Traitorous Conduct of Rebel Leaders Has Not Lost But Has Made Loyalists**

Mr. Merriman, Premier of Cape Colony speaking at Somerset West, condemned Maritz's treachery. He compared Maritz with Benedict Arnold's desertion of Washington during the American Revolution. Maritz, he said was entitled to ignominy throughout the country.

He emphasized the justice of Great Britain's action, and compared German's Napoleonic tyranny with England's object in the creation of free citizens, not disciplined puppets. South Africa's duty was plain: it was to stand by Great Britain throughout the appalling struggle.

Mr. Merriman said he was grieved at any suspicion of division in this country. Maritz's traitorous conduct had not lost, but made loyalists who were determined to struggle for a united people, free Dominions, and a free Empire.

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**British Army Officer Tells of Some Thrilling Experiences in the Western Campaign**

**STRUCK MEN DOWN AS BY LIGHTNING**

**Men Have Very Narrow Escapes From Death in This Terrible Inferno of Bullets**

"I HAVE been in several engagements have been in several engagements previous to the present campaign," says an officer, "but I never imagined anything could be so terrible as modern artillery fire. I was one of those fortunate ones who have been only wounded, but I never expected to come out alive, and I think I must have a charmed life when I think of what I have gone through. I do not believe any other soldiers except the British could have gone through what we have gone through in the recent fighting.

"Our men are indeed remarkable. As long as they have an officer to lead them nothing will induce them to retire unless ordered to, and then it is often very difficult to get them to obey. You understand in war how difficult it is to know what is really happening to any other unit except your own. You live and die in a little world whose limits are your eye-sight and those limits are extended only by sound, which tells you very little. In Flanders, which is a perfectly flat country, your little world is extremely small.

**Advance Under Difficulties.**

"On Oct 18 our regiment was ordered to advance and attack the enemy, who were reported to be retiring. We marched along a flat road for some distance, and then came under a fairly long range artillery fire, which caused us to extend. We continued our advance to some cross roads, where we came under the fire of the enemy's infantry, which was fortunately high. Now that we have these double companies there are two captains. Captain B— was my senior, and led one platoon whilst I led the other. I saw a wood in my front, which seemed to offer some cover from the shells, so I led my men towards it. We then entered the wood, and had quite a lively time driving out the German infantry.

**Terrible Artillery Fire.**

"The enemy are no match for us in this kind of fighting, and we enjoyed thoroughly the work of hunting up the Germans, whom we shot down like rabbits. When we reached the outskirts of the wood we came under a terrible artillery fire from the enemy's guns, which were only 800 yards away. I withdrew my men under the cover of a ditch, and then moved towards the left to find out what had happened to Captain B— and our other platoon. I met two stragglers, both wounded, who said the platoon had been completely wiped out, and Captain B— seriously wounded.

**Hard 300 Yards.**

"I took eight men and again moved to the outskirts of the wood, where I found a perfectly flat turnip field stretching away towards the enemy.

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About 300 yards out I saw a line of our infantry lying flat on the ground and made my way towards them. No sooner did we leave the cover of the wood when the enemy's guns opened up on us. I shall never forget traversing those 300 yards. The enemy's guns, which were only 800 yards away, fired with extreme accuracy.

"It seemed impossible that my little party could escape. Three were almost immediately hit, but we others kept on and reached the line lying in the open. Half a platoon were extended at five paces. To my horror I found all were dead or wounded except about three men, who were keeping perfectly still. I found the Subaltern Lieutenant— on one knee, with one hand resting on the ground just in the attitude of a runner who is waiting the signal for the start of a race. He was stone dead. A shrapnel bullet had pierced his head.

**As If By Lightning.**

"The man next him, who was badly wounded in the thigh told me they were ordered to support the firing line, which was 200 yards ahead, and had only advanced 500 yards from the wood when the entire line was struck down as if by lightning. He said that Lieutenant B— after being hit merely said, 'Go on, please. I can't move; I must be wounded.' This man begged me to cut off his pack, which prevented him from moving. He had three shrapnel bullets in the thigh and another in his shoulder. I cut off his pack, and found the whole base of the shell lodged between his pack and his back. This is an amazing escape, as if it had touched him, he would have been instantly killed.

**Lines of Wounded.**

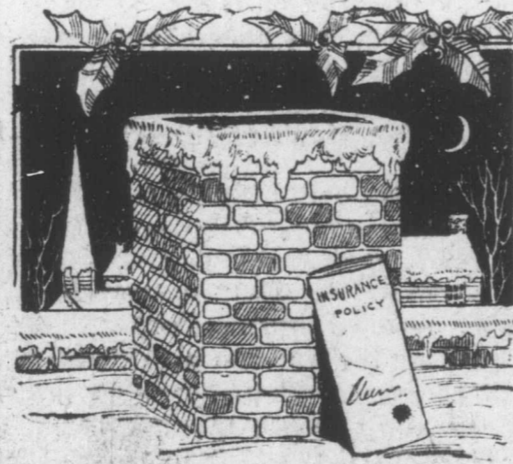
"Several other wounded cried out to me, begging me to cut off their packs which prevented them from getting away. I ordered my four surviving companions to do this, and told the wounded not to move for the present, as the least movement caused the enemy to open fire again. I then crept forward another 200 yards, where I found our firing line, under Captain B—. They were lying, every man killed or wounded, within about 400 yards of the enemy's guns, which we could not even see. In the centre a bunch of twenty-five men lay in a heap, having massed as they advanced for mutual protection, which, as you know, all men do in an attack.

"I have never seen such wounds. At this short range many had been blown to bits by the shrapnel. One man had twelve bullets in his legs. Another had his chest blown away. Many were dead; others dying. I found Captain B— still alive with his thigh shattered and another wound in his neck. He was talking incoherently, and ordered me to take the guns by assault. This, of course, was impossible, as I only had four men with me, and in any case would have meant instant death.

**Cutting Off Packs.**

"As long as we lay quiet the enemy's guns did not fire, but directly any one moved we would get another shell right on top of us. I saw that unless Captain B— received speedy attention he would die. I therefore collected two rifles and made a stretcher out of a great coat. Meanwhile, before moving, we cut off the packs from all the men still living so as to give them a chance of crawling away. When those who could not move saw I was leaving the firing-line they begged me not to leave them. We carried Captain B— almost to the edge of the wood before the enemy's guns noticed us. Then they opened fire, but we reached cover.

"I then got some more volunteers from my platoon and four stretchers, and these brave fellows crawled right up to the dead firing-line and carried others out under a heavy fire. Several wounded were away hit on the



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way. I went to the extreme right of the line to cut off the pack of a man who was very badly wounded and had been calling out for assistance. I heard a shell coming and instinctively put up my arm to guard my face, and tried to throw myself on the ground. But I was too late. I felt a terrific blow just as if someone had hit me with a giant red-hot poker. I was spun round and seemed to go on spinning, and then fell to the ground. I thought I had been killed, as I felt a violent blow in the abdomen.

**"Regulations Prescribe."**

"After a short time I again got up and went on running, only to fall every twenty or thirty yards. Shortly after I came to a road with a small bank, and, as the enemy's shells were falling freely, I lay down. A first-aid man then came up and looked at my wound. I said to him, 'Help me to the wood, and then dress my wound.' He replied, 'The regulation prescribe that all wounded must be first dressed in the firing-line.' This seemed very funny to me at such a moment when at any moment either of us might be hit by another shell. The gallant fellow then proceeded to dress my arm, under a heavy fire.

"Other wounded came up, and also wished to reach the wood, but this first-aid man would let none of them so, always prefacing his remarks with, 'The regulations prescribe.' Finally, after a rest, I ran as hard as I could to the wood, and went through it. On the other side it was fairly safe, but I had to walk a long way before I was put in a common country cart with several other wounded. There were no motor-cars and no ambulances.

"Finally we reached a field hospital, where I was given morphine. I was then put in a train along with hundreds of other wounded, and took three days and a half to reach Boulogne. I had no splint put on my arm, and suffered horribly. I found Captain B— in the same train. He lay for three days with his smashed thigh, also without a splint. I asked the R.A.M.C. Colonel in charge of the train to give me morphine, but he replied, 'Stick it out; it is bad for you.' I do not see what harm it would have done me, considering how much I was suffering.

"Our wounds were dressed every day on the journey, and we were well fed. I finally reached London, and am now in a comfortable home in X. street. Twelve pieces of lead have already been taken from my arm, and the doctors have decided to leave the rest in. This is all I know of the war, and have not the least idea whether we won or were beaten on the day I was hit."

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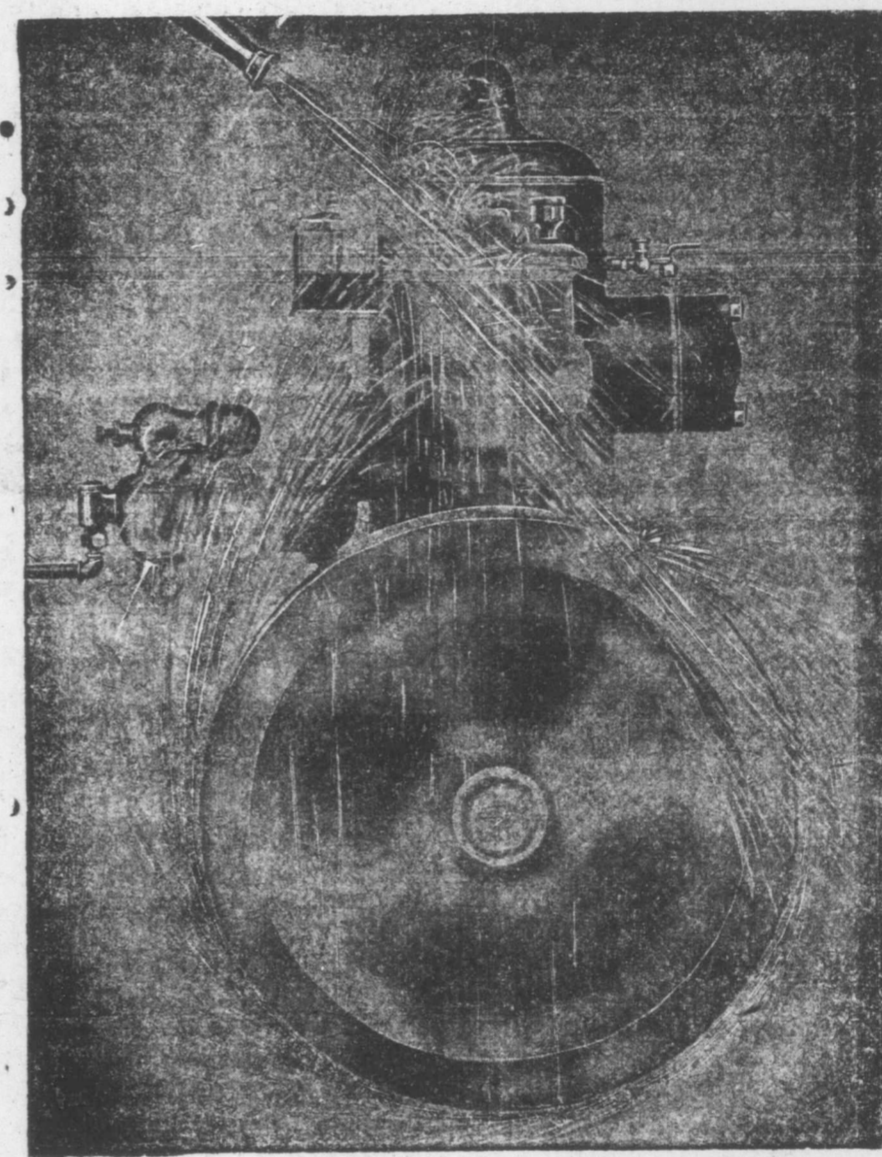
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